generally remained unchanged. As reported by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the total expenditure upto October, 2002 on various schemes is Rs. 259.20 crores, which includes the amount sanctioned by the Union Government.

Clearance to Bt. Cotton

2403. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether conditional commercial clearance was given by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee on Bt. Cotton;

(b) if so, the details of the conditions;

(c) whether the claim of Monsanto-Mahyco Seed Company that Bt. Cotton was effective pest-resistant crop, was false in the fields of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra where Bt. Cotton was sown;

(d) whether the conditional clearance given to Genetically Modified Bt. Cotton would be withdrawn, in the light of above facts;

(e) whether Competent Authority is considering clearance to Transgenic Mustard; and

(f) if so, the details of complete trials of Genetically Modified Seeds, Bt. Cotton and Transgenic Mustard on bio-safety and the effect on non-GM crop?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes Sir; The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) accorded conditional clearance for introduction of three Bt. cotton hybrids namely BT MECH 162, BT MECH 184, BT MECH 12 into the environment for a period of three years from April 2002 to March 2005. The conditions, *inter-alia,* include plantation of a non-Bt refuge around the periphery of the Bt fields equivalent to five rows of non_Bt cotton variety or 20% of the total sown area, monitoring the susceptibility of bollworms to Bt gene *vis-a-vis* baseline susceptibility data by an agency identified by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, undertaking studies on possible impacts on non-target insects and crops, developing plans for Bt based Integrated Pest Management, developing and depositing with the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Research (NBPGR), the DNA fingerprints of the

approved varieties and undertaking of an awareness and education programme for farmers.

(c) The three approved hybrid varieties are presently under cultivation only in six states namely Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Some of the fields where these hybrid varieties are being cultivated have recently been monitored by the Committees constituted by this Ministry for each state. The Committees found the performance of Bt. Cotton satisfactory.

(d) There is no proposal from the Government to ban the sale of Bt Cotton seeds in India.

(e) M/s Proagro PGS India Ltd. Gurgaon requested approval of GEAC for commercial cultivation of transgenic mustard. The GEAC in the 34th Meeting held on 7th November, 2002 considered the proposal but no final decision was taken.

(f) The biosafety assessment includes molecular characterization of the gene (s), biochemical characterization of the expressed proteins, estimation of level of expressed proteins, safety of the expressed proteins to the non-target organisms, environmental fate of expressed proteins, pollen escape, outcrossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect on non-target organisms, confirmation of the absence of Terminator Gene, and baseline susceptibility studies and agronomic, compositional and food and feed safety evaluation of transgenic hybrids as compared to the non-transgenic counterpart.

Field trials of Bt. Cotton and Mustard seeds

†2404. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have permitted field trials of Cotton and Mustard Seeds, modified by Genetic Engineering;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the farmers had a very bad experience with regard to Cotton seeds, modified by Genetic Engineering;

(c) whether the conclusions of Indian Council of Agricultural Research on proposed Mustard seeds are not being made public; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.